

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00  
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 ICA-11  
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R 090033Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6038  
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY  
AMEMBASSY SUVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: EAIR, NZ, AS, WS, XP  
SUBJECT: CIVIL AVIATION: CONTINENTAL AND THE PACIFIC

1. IN OUR LOBBYING EFFORTS OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS REGARDING CONTINENTAL'S ENTRY INTO NEW ZEALAND, WE HAVE STRESSED TO BOTH THE NEW ZEALANDERS AND DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES HERE OF PACIFIC ISLAND GOVERNMENTS THE REAL BENEFIT TO THE ISLANDS OF CONTINENTAL'S PROPOSED OPERATIONS. WE HAVE PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED THIS POINT TO WESTERN SAMOAN OFFICIALS IN THE HOPE THAT THEY IN TURN WOULD APPLY SOME PRESSURE ON THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENTS, BOTH OF WHOM PUT HIGH PRIORITY ON THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF THE PACIFIC REGION.

2. WITH THIS BACKGROUND, WE WERE INTERESTED TO SEE WESTERN SAMOAN PRIME MINISTER TUPUOLA EFI ISSUE A FORMAL APPEAL IN LATE JUNE FOR INCREASED CONSIDERATION BY AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND OF PACIFIC ISLAND INTERESTS IN CIVIL AVIATION MATTERS. SPEAKING BEFORE  
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THE PACIFIC REGIONAL SHIPPING AND CIVIL AVIATION COUNCIL MEETING IN APIA, THE PRIME MINISTER CALLED FOR A "NEW MORALITY" ON THE PART OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND IN AVIATION AFFAIRS. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST ON THE CONTINENTAL QUESTION ARE THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS:

3. "IF I CAN TOUCH UPON CIVIL AVIATION FIRST, I FEEL

THAT THE BASIC QUESTION THAT FACES US IS THAT OF  
DECIDING HOW TO RE-DEFINE THE RULES TO ASSURE THAT  
THE RIGHTS OF SMALL NATIONS ARE ADEQUATELY PROTECTED.  
THE GUT OF THE ISSUE IS THAT WE ARE SMALL. WE HAVE  
TO DEFINE THE RULES AS WE SEE THEM TO PROTECT OUR  
INTERESTS.

- THIS COMES OUT IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS WE MIGHT HAVE  
WITH LARGER COUNTRIES SUCH AS NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA.  
I OFTEN FEEL THAT IN SUCH NEGOTIATIONS THERE IS  
OFTEN LITTLE BASIS IN LOGIC OR MORALITY FOR THE STANCE  
OF THE LARGER COUNTRIES. IN A STRICT SENSE, OF  
COURSE, THEIR POSITIONS ARE CORRECT. BUT THE OTHER  
FELLOW ALSO HAS A BASIC RIGHT. WE NEED TO DEFINE A  
NEW MORALITY SO THAT THE SMALLER COUNTRIES HAVE  
A ROLE IN MAKING THE RULES. THIS IS APPLICABLE WHETHER  
IT IS IN WESTERN SAMOA/NEW ZEALAND NEGOTIATIONS, OR  
FIJI/NEW ZEALAND NEGOTIATIONS, OR LOBBYING AUSTRALIA  
AND NEW ZEALAND REGARDING THEIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH  
OTHER COUNTRIES ON TRANS-PACIFIC RIGHTS.

- AUSTRALIA IS FIGHTING THE UNITED STATES ON  
CAPACITY RIGHTS FOR AUSTRALIA/U.S. TRAFFIC. BUT IF  
FIVE OR SIX ADDITIONAL FLIGHTS THROUGH THE SOUTH  
PACIFIC BY CONTINENTAL AIRLINES ARE ALLOWED, THE SPIN-  
OFF BENEFITS TO THE SMALLER ECONOMIES OF THIS REGION  
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WILL BE CONSIDERABLE. I AM NOT ASKING AUSTRALIA TO  
THROW IN THE TOWEL BUT IF REGIONAL COOPERATION IS TO  
MEAN ANYTHING THE LARGER COUNTRIES HAVE TO TAKE INTO  
ACCOUNT THE VIEWS AND CONCERNS OF THE SMALLER COUNTRIES.  
THE QUESTION OF ADDITIONAL TRANS-PACIFIC FLIGHTS  
WITH TOUCH-DOWN POINTS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC HAVE  
IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR ECONOMIES. IF THERE  
ARE LESS FLIGHTS THAN PRESENT IT COULD MEAN THE DEATH  
OF THE HOTEL AND TOURIST INDUSTRY IN WESTERN SAMOA  
AND IN OTHER SMALLER COUNTRIES IN THIS PART OF THE  
SOUTH PACIFIC. BY THE SAME TOKEN, INCREASED FLIGHTS  
WOULD RESULT IN A VIABLE TRANSPORT ACCOMMODATION AND  
TOURIST INDUSTRY MAKING USE OF EXISTING AND UNDER-  
UTILIZED FACILITIES."

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: AT THE TIME OF THE GOVERNMENT-TO-  
GOVERNMENT TALKS IN WELLINGTON REGARDING CONTINENTAL  
EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE WESTERN SAMOAN GOVERNMENT  
INSTRUCTED ITS HIGH COMMISSION HERE TO MAKE FORMAL  
REPRESENTATIONS TO THE GNZ SUPPORTING CONTINENTAL'S  
APPLICATION. LAST MONTH, DURING A VISIT TO WELLINGTON,  
THE WESTERN SAMOAN ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THE SAMOANS HAD MADE APPROACHES  
ALONG THE SAME LINES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA.  
OTHER RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL FROM FIJI AND  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA HAVE ALSO QUESTIONED US ON THIS SUBJECT,  
BUT WE ARE UNAWARE OF ANY ACTION THEY MAY HAVE TAKEN  
VIS-A-VIS THE AUSTRALIANS OR NEW ZEALANDERS. SELDEN

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## Message Attributes

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